

**Heath and Social Services
In-Home Supportive Services
2003-2004 Grand Jury Report**

I. Reason for Investigation

The Grand Jury elected to review the In-Home Supportive Services (IHSS) program of the Older and Disabled Adult Services Division of the Solano County Health and Social Services Department.

II. Procedure

The Grand Jury:

- Toured the IHSS site
- Interviewed the IHSS Administrator
- Reviewed information on program operations, types of services provided to clients and State audits of the program
- Reviewed the County Welfare Directors Association of California Report dated January 2003 entitled *In-Home Supportive Services: Past, Present and Future*
- Reviewed IHSS informational brochures

III. Background

1. The mission of the IHSS program is to maintain consumers' (aged, blind and disabled citizens) quality of life by providing assistance that enables them to remain safely in their own homes, living independently and preventing the need for "costly and [or] less desirable out-of-home placement facilities." According to the County Welfare Directors Association of California Report, California's changing demographics results in having the largest older adult population in the nation with 3.5 million people over the age of 65.

2. The State provides direction while the County staff provides the following services (Activities of Daily Living [ADL]):

- Domestic assistance, such as house cleaning, meal preparation, laundry and shopping
- Bowel and bladder care (diapers and catheters)
- Respiration assistance (cleaning nebulizers and changing oxygen tanks)
- Personal care (feeding, bathing, dressing, grooming and oral hygiene)
- Assistance getting in and out of bed
- Assistance with walking

3. The In-Home Supportive Services Program is funded by federal, state and county sources that are combined to meet the programs' operating budget. The payments made to providers this fiscal year will total a little over \$30 million dollars in Solano County. The County's share of that cost will be approximately \$6.5 million dollars. The County also has responsibility for a 40% share of the administrative cost for IHSS. Administrative costs include staff salaries and all supplies for the operation of the programs.

4. Supporting the IHSS program is the Personal Services Care Program which accounts for 85% of the total number of clients served the IHSS. This service includes caregiver payrolls and benefits, initial one-time cleaning fees and the Public Authority Administration which maintains a registry of clients and care providers.

5. The IHSS Residual Program accounts for 15% of clients served.

6. Solano County uses a social model utilized in virtually every county statewide. In this model non-medical caregivers are hired and fired by the consumer of the services. This encourages the consumers' sense of "independence and control" according to testimony. This model focuses on ADL and the ability of IHSS consumers to function within their own homes.

7. Currently, there are no funds dedicated for providing training for care providers. The County encourages providers to seek training using the adult education programs for first aid. The following training is desirable: sensitivity training in working with the aged and disabled, wound care, safety concerns and use of physical aids such as wheel chairs and walkers.

8. IHSS program currently has two social workers that process referrals. There are nine social workers that conduct initial assessments to determine types of services needed and hours of services that may be provided based on state guidelines. These social workers also make required annual home visits to the consumers and re-assess the consumers' needs for services. According to testimony, the social worker's supervisor reviews each case once a year and client feedback is obtained once a year.

9. It is desirable to have a larger number of service providers than clients. At the time of the Grand Jury interview, IHSS had 2,461 service providers available to serve approximately 2,300 Solano County clients. Parents, children or spouses of the clients account for 987 of the service providers or 40.1%.

10. Throughout the State of California it was found that 66% of the individuals receiving IHSS services are female; 57% are ethnic minorities; 44% have a primary language other than English; 85% receive personal care services and 86% receive Supplemental Security Income (SSI) benefits. (*County Welfare Directors Association of California, January 2003*).

IV. Findings and Recommendations

Each finding is referenced to the background paragraph number

Finding #1- With the growth of the older adult population in California, the funding for this program must grow correspondingly. (1)(3)

Recommendation #1 – Solano County Board of Supervisors pursue all avenues and sources of funding to support this important program.

Finding #2 - There are no funds allotted to train care providers. In addition to those areas previously reported, training is needed in the following: special-disease care, dietary needs, care for minor children, care for individuals with mental impairments, CPR, lifting basics, nutrition, universal precautions and mandated reporting. (2)(7)

Recommendation #2 – Solano County Board of Supervisors provide funds, and in addition arrange collaborations with community organizations to provide training to care providers.

Finding #3 – Social Workers are only required to visit the clients once per year. As a result, feedback from clients is normally obtained once per year. (8)

Recommendation #3 - Although it is not required by regulation, one home visit per quarter is recommended. Feedback from clients should be sought at least twice a year to provide a more timely assessment of client service.

V. Comments

The IHSS program provides valuable services to some of the most vulnerable citizens in our community, enabling them to remain safely in their own homes. The Grand Jury commends the division administrator and staff for the services and programs they provide to the aged and disabled community.

VI. Affected Agencies

- Solano County Board of Supervisors
- Solano County Health and Social Services